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ABSTRACT

This paper examines college student assessment of teaching by television at Eastern Kentucky University. Teaching by television in Kentucky is facilitated through the Kentucky Telelinking Network (KTLN). This statewide, two-way compressed video system connects main campus and extended campus sites by digital land lines to a regional "hub." Students in extended campus sites can see and hear an instructor teaching from the main campus and be engaged in interactive discourse. Students in two different undergraduate courses were surveyed on their attitudes toward teaching by television at the middle of the semester and at the end of semester, at both the main and extended campus locations. Students responded to nine items pertaining to general information, attitudes towards KTLN classes, technical aspects of the interactive TV class, and logistical support. Mid-semester and end of semester results were compared. Responses relating to whether students learned as they would in a traditional class, and their confidence and comfort level with a KTLN class remained the same or increased for both classes, at the main and extended campus locations. In both classes, students' perceptions of the advantages of a KTLN class outweighing the disadvantages increased for the main campus site, but stayed the same for the extended campus location. (Contains 16 references.) (Author/SWC)

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College Students Assessment of Teaching By Television

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Paper presented at the annual meeting of the

Mid-South Educational Research Association

Tuscaloosa, Alabama

November 6-8, 1996

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to examine college student assessment of teaching by television in a state supported rural Kentucky university. Teaching by television in Kentucky is facilitated through the Kentucky Telelinking Network (KTLN). This statewide two-way, compressed video system connects main campus and extended campus classrooms or sites by digital land lines to a regional "hub". Students in extended campus can see and hear an instructor in a main campus and be engaged in interactive discourse. Voice and television image quality are consistent for all sites. Mid semester and end of semester assessments were compared in two separate and different undergraduate courses. Assessments were administered separately by the respective instructors of the two classes using the same assessment form. Students responded to nine items pertaining to the level of learning, confidence and comfortability, usefulness of site facilitators, and advantages or disadvantages of a course by television. Tallies of responses were converted to percentages. The main question asked was "will end of semester responses when compared to mid semester responses be the same, higher, or lower? It was concluded that overall, students assessed the response items the same, or higher at the end of the semester.

COLLEGE STUDENTS ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING BY TELEVISION

Introduction

Faculty have been divided in their levels of enthusiasm for teaching by television since its inception at Eastern Kentucky University in 1994. Traditionalists did not accept it because they believed that personal contact will be lost with students, and that faculty will become mere "talking heads". Experimentalists wanted to give it a try and to see whether it was viable. They wanted to "give the new technology a chance". The authors of this report belong to the second group.

Problem

College professors recognize the sweeping changes taking place in technology, and are slowly becoming adept in using the new technology in their teaching. While professors wrestle with the complexities involved in using technology, students are at the same time deliberating on whether technology is just sophisticated adornment or a learning tool that will help them master knowledge. It seems to the authors that continuous attention must be paid to what students think and feel concerning the use of new technology by their teachers.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to report on student assessment of teaching by television in two undergraduate courses in a state supported rural university. Teaching by television in Kentucky is facilitated through the Kentucky Telelinking Network (KTLN). This statewide two-way, compressed video system connects

individual classrooms or sites by digital land lines to a regional "hub". Students in extended campus sites can see and hear an instructor teaching from the main campus. Instructors can, likewise, teach a class from any of the sites without losing quality in voice or image. All sites are connected by telephone, fax lines, and e-mail accessibility. Will student accept the process better over a semester?

Justification

Assessment of college teaching plays an important role in instructional development, problem clarification, instructional design and redesign, and field testing and implementation (Gray, 1991).

State legislatures across the country are hoping that distance learning will facilitate effective teaching and learning. Legislators also believe that in the long run this will reduce the amount of money spent on faculty salaries. Students should be allowed to be the final arbiters of the decision on distance learning. Will students learn better under distance teaching than they would in a traditional class? Will students who see the teacher face to face in a distance learning class have different learning experiences than students in the same distance learning class in another site miles away? Will students change their minds about distance learning as they become more familiar with the process? This report will provide may provide the answer to the last question. Distance learning will encounter initial resistance from college students However,

attitudes will change as clients become more familiar with the process. The authors posit that students in each course will give the same, or higher ratings to each item in the assessment form at the end of the semester than at mid semester.

Literature Review

Courses in which instructors and students interact face to face are consistently evaluated on student achievement, instructor performance, and the effectiveness of materials and methods. Evaluations of courses delivered by television should also receive such treatment and more. The effectiveness of every delivery system should be evaluated. There are not many studies conducted on college student attitudes towards teaching by television. Educators in all levels cannot afford to ignore the impact of technological and interactive media on their profession.

Van-Horn, (1993) asserted that business and industry will take the lead in technological innovation if universities, and faculty shirk their responsibility to respond positively to the challenge. Lacina and Book (1991) indicated that distance education by television can be both instructionally effective and cost effective if careful attention is paid to five steps. They believed that colleges will save time and avoid pitfalls if they pay attention to planning, preparation, rehearsal, presentation, and review in course development.

Egan and others (1991) suggested that mastering good presentation skills was important in teaching by television.

Teaching by television is done in a number of disciplines such as criminal justice, medicine, business, mass communications, education, and nursing . Billings and others (1994) reported that nursing faculty who taught courses by television were positive about administrative support and site reception, even though such course required extra preparation and changes in teaching style and strategy. Morris (1993) discussed how to teach critical thinking about television, and described methods used in a college class on television analysis. Southworth (1988) reported on the use of slow-scan television systems in telemedicine.

Critical television viewing skills were taught to gifted learners in grades 5-8 by (Hunter, 1992). Lacina and others (1991) detailed a number of institutions and their work on using distance education by television. Their conclusion was that by following certain guidelines, colleges and universities can become both instructionally efficient and cost effective. Egan and others (1991) assessed the perceptions of 11 graduate special education students in Utah who had experienced different types of televised learning. The students indicated that faculty who prepared well, organized their syllabi and practiced good presentation skills were more effective than those who did not. The students also preferred timely feedback from their instructors or on-site facilitators about their progress.

Summary of the literature review

There is a dearth of literature dealing with college student assessment of distance learning. Teaching by television at the college level is becoming more popular in the United States, as state legislatures look for ways to reduce the cost of paying faculty salaries. Courses are currently being taught by television in a variety of disciplines. Instructors who teach by television are positive when they receive adequate training, and administrative and technical support. Adequate training should help them to plan, prepare, rehearse, present , and review their courses. Students like to receive time feedback from their instructors and site facilitators.

Procedure

The authors taught two separate and different undergraduate courses in the Spring 1996 semester via television. The courses originated from the same classroom in the main campus of a rural Kentucky university. Each course was delivered to the same three additional extended campus sites. The first course was EDF 202 or professional orientation. It is open to students having sophomore standing. The course acquaints students with the role of public education and nature of the teaching profession. There are required laboratory experiences. In this course, students also assess their personal fitness for teaching, and complete their application for admission to teacher education (Eastern Kentucky University undergraduate Catalog 1995-97, p. 124). The second course is EDF 317, Human Development and Learning. The

prerequisite for taking this course is a biological or social science course. The catalog description is - "the study of psychological, biological and environmental bases of behavior. Laboratory experiences are also required." An assessment of teaching was completed by each student in each course at mid semester and at the end of the semester. The assessments of main - campus students - Richmond, and those of one of the three extended campuses - Danville, were analyzed and compared.

Design

Assessment questions were adapted from the university's division of media resources television section Interactive TV Class Assessment (1995. This assessment form sought responses to questions in four areas: general information, attitudes towards KTLN classes, technical aspects of the interactive TV class, and logistical support of the interactive TV class. The authors adapted the statements pertaining to students' attitudes towards KTLN teaching. Nine statements were provided, and students were requested to respond using likert type scale. Strongly agree, and agree responses were merged and converted to percentages. Midsemester and end of semester responses for each item were then compared to determine whether end of semester responses were higher, lower, or the same. Summaries are provided in the following section.

Mid and end of semester assessments - EDF 202 Danville Campus.

Assessment of the statement "Learned as much as I would in a traditional class" remained the same at midsemester and at the end of the semester. Confidence level in a KTLN class rose to one hundred percent at the end of the semester. At mid semester it was only twenty eight percent. The results for comfortability in a KTLN class were the same as for confidence level. The site facilitator was rated as always available, and also very helpful in one hundred percent of the responses at the end of the semester. At mid semester the ratings were also one hundred percent for both items. Sixty seven percent of respondents stated that the advantages of taking a KTLN class outweighed the disadvantages in both the mid semester and end of semester assessments. In the mid semester assessments all students strongly disagreed that they will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student. At the end of the semester, all students strongly agreed that they will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student. Ratings on two items remained the same for both mid and end of semester assessments. Summary tables for both assessments are in Tables 1, and 2.

[Insert Tables 1 and 2 Here]

Mid and end of semester assessment EDF 202 Richmond Campus

Ratings of the assessment in six items were higher at the end of semester than at mid semester. Eighty six percent of students thought that the site facilitator was always helpful at mid semester. The ratings fell to sixty seven percent at the end of

the semester for these two items. Ratings in three items were lower at the end of semester than at mid semester. Ratings were lower on the statement "students participated more than they would in a traditional class" were lower by 5% in the end of semester assessment than in the midterm assessment. The site facilitator was rated 19 percent lower on availability and helpfulness in the end of semester. The data from which this summary was made can be viewed in Tables 3 and 4.

[Insert Tables 3 and 4 Here]

Mid and Edd of Semester assessments - EDF 317 Danville Campus

There was no change between the midsemester and end of semester semester assessments in all items. There was a sixty seven percent "strongly agree" rating and a thirty three percent "strongly disagree" rating for each item in both assessment periods. This information is available in Tables 5 and 6.

[Insert Tables 5 and 6 Here)

Mid and end of semester assessments - EDF 317 Richmond Campus

At the end of semester assessment 42 percent of students strongly agreed , or agreed that they learned as much as they would have in a traditional class. This was higher than the 12 percent who agreed with the statement in the mid semester assessment. Sixty sen percent strongly agreed, or agreed with the statement that they were confident in a KTLN class at the end of semester assessment. This was above the combined fifty percent rating in the mid semester assessment. Seventy one percent strongly agreed, or agreed with the statement that they were

comfortable in a KTLN class at the end of the semester. This is higher than the fifty percent rating given in the mid semester assessment.

Twenty eight percent strongly agreed that there was a diversity in exchange of ideas during the end of semester assessment. This was higher than the twenty four percent rating given in the mid semester assessment. Thirty nine percent strongly agreed that students participated more they would have in a traditional class. This was higher than the zero percent rating on this item in the mid semester assessment. Seventy one percent strongly agreed, or agreed with the statement that the site facilitator was always available and always helpful respectively at the end of the semester, as opposed to a twenty five percent rating at mid semester on both items. Twelve percent strongly agreed with the statement that the advantages of a KTLN class outweighed the disadvantages at mid semester. At the end of the semester twenty eight percent strongly agreed, while fourteen percent agreed. Sixty two percent will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student at mid semester. At the end of the semester the rating dropped to fifty seven percent. Information comparing the two assessments is contained in Tables 7 and 8.

[Insert Tables 7 and 8 Here]

Summary and Conclusions

Responses in percentages by all respondents were the same or higher for each campus and in both courses, in statements pertaining to learning, confidence, and comfortability and advantages of a KTLN class. Respondents in each course except EDF 202 students in the Danville campus believed that there was diversity in exchange of ideas between sites.

All respondents except EDF 202 students in the Richmond campus strongly agreed that students participated more than they would have in a non-distance learning class. Richmond EDF 202 students also rated their site facilitator lower on availability and helpfulness. Richmond EDF 317 students will not recommend a KTLN class to other students. These results are summarized in Table 9. [Insert Table 9 Here]

Assessments were the same or higher in each campus and in each course for the following statements:

1. Learned as would in a traditional class.
2. Confident in a KTLN class.
3. Comfortable in a KTLN class.
8. Advantages of a KTLN class outweigh the disadvantages.

Assessment by the EDF 202 Danville class was lower at the end of the semester for the following item:

5. Diversity in exchange of ideas between all sites.
5. Students participated more than they would in a traditional class.
6. Site facilitator was always available.

7. Site facilitator was always helpful.

Assessments by the EDF 317 Richmond class were lower at the end of the semester for the following item:

9. Will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student.

The summary in Table 9 indicates that in statements pertaining to "learning", "comfortability" and "confidence" in a KTLN class, all respondents in both courses and in both campuses were unanimously positive. The respondents in the EDF 317 Richmond campus will not recommend a taking KTLN class to another student. The reason for this may be that they expected a traditional type course, because they were sitting face to face with the instructor in the main campus. They considered interactions between the instructor and students in the extended campus sites to be distracting.

Richmond EDF 202 students also strongly disagreed that the site facilitator was always helpful, or always available. The authors cannot understand the reason for this because the site facilitator did everything that the instructor asked. It could be that the site facilitator did not have to do much because the instructor was doing much of what facilitators in the extended campus do e.g. giving personal help to a student who needed it.

The authors believe that distance teaching is effective for both main campus and extended campus students. Training in using the technology was of a high quality, and was very effective. The technological and administrative support were excellent. Teaching by television demands more rigorous planning and greater

creativity on the part of instructors. However, this is generally expected of instructors in a teaching institution catering to a regional clientele. The general conclusion is that assessments were positive. Similar studies that analyze all distance learning sites are recommended.

Students ought to be acquainted with the technology. Explaining to them how the technology works is good, but allowing them to experiment hands on with images, voice and sound is better. The authors of this report gave students the opportunity to do individual or group presentations using the system. There does not appear to be much difference between the academic performance of students in a face to face interaction with the instructor, and those who are located in a far away site.

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Appendix A

Table 1.

EDF 202 Interactive TV Class
Mid Semester Course Assessment (%), Danville Center

5= Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Undecided
2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

N=3

Item	5	4	3	2	1
1. Learned as would in a traditional class	67	-	-	-	33
2. Confident in a KTLN class	67	-	-	33	-
3. Comfortable in a KTLN class	67	-	-	33	-
4. Diversity in exchange of ideas between all sites	-	33	-	-	67
5. Students participated more than they would in a traditional class	-	67	-	-	33
6. Site facilitator was always available	100	-	-	-	-
7. Site facilitator was always helpful	100	-	-	-	-
8. Advantages of a KTLN class outweigh the disadvantages	67	-	-	-	33
9. Will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student	-	-	-	-	100

Table 2.

5= Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Undecided
2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

EDF 202 Interactive TV class
End of Semester Assessment %, Danville Center

N=3

Item	5	4	3	2	1
1. Learned as would in a traditional class	67	-	33	-	-
2. Confident in a KTLN class	100	-	-	-	-
3. Comfortable in a KTLN class	100	-	-	-	-
4. Diversity in exchange of ideas between all sites	-	-	-	33	67
5. Students participated more than they would in a traditional class	100	-	-	-	-
6. Site facilitator was always available	100	-	-	-	-
7. Site facilitator was always helpful	100	-	-	-	-
8. Advantages of a KTLN class outweigh the disadvantages	67	-	33	-	-
9. Will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student	100	-	-	-	-

Table 3.

5= Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Undecided
2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

EDF 202 Interactive TV class
Mid semester Assessment %, Richmond Campus.
N=7

Item	5	4	3	2	1
1. Learned as would in a traditional class		29	14	14	43
2. Confident in a KTLN class	14	14	14	14	43
3. Comfortable in a KTLN class	14	14	14	14	43
4. Diversity in exchange of ideas between all sites	29	14	14	-	29
5. Students participated more than they would in a traditional class	14	57	14	-	14
6. Site facilitator was always available	86	-	-	-	14
7. Site facilitator was always helpful	86	-	-	-	14
8. Advantages of a KTLN class outweigh the disadvantages	14	-	29	-	57
9. Will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student	71	-	-	-	29

Table 4.

5= Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Undecided
2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

EDF 202 Interactive TV class
End of semester assessment %, Richmond Campus

N=3

Item	5	4	3	2	1
1. Learned as would in a traditional class	67	-	-	-	33
2. Confident in a KTLN class	67	-	-	-	33
3. Comfortable in a KTLN class	67	-	-	-	33
4. Diversity in exchange of ideas between all sites	67	-	-	-	33
5. Students participated more than they would in a traditional class	33	33	-	-	33
6. Site facilitator was always available	67	-	-	-	33
7. Site facilitator was always helpful	67	-	-	-	33
8. Advantages of a KTLN class outweigh the disadvantages	67	33	-	-	-
9. Will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student	100	-	-	-	-

Table 5.

5= Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Undecided
2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

EDF 317 Interactive TV class
Mid semester assessment %, Danville Campus

N=3

Item	Rating 5	4	3	2	1
1. Learned as would in a traditional class	67	-	-	-	33
2. Confident in a KTLN class	67	-	-	-	33
3. Comfortable in a KTLN class	67	-	-	-	33
4. Diversity in exchange of ideas between all sites	67	-	-	-	33
5. Students participated more than they would in a traditional class	67	-	-	-	33
6. Site facilitator was always available	67	-	-	-	33
7. Site facilitator was always helpful	67	-	-	-	33
8. Advantages of a KTLN class outweigh the disadvantages	67	-	-	-	33
9. Will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student	67	-	-	-	33

Table 6.

5= Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Undecided
2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

EDF 317 Interactive TV class
End of semester assessment %, Danville Campus

N=3

Item	5	4	3	2	1
1. Learned as would in a traditional class	67	-	-	-	33
2. Confident in a KTLN class	67	-	-	-	33
3. Comfortable in a KTLN class	67	-	-	-	33
4. Diversity in exchange of ideas between all sites	67	-	-	-	33
5. Students participated more than they would in a traditional class	67	-	-	-	33
6. Site facilitator was always available	67	-	-	-	33
7. Site facilitator was always helpful	67	-	-	-	33
8. Advantages of a KTLN class outweigh the disadvantages	67	-	-	-	33
9. Will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student	67	-	-	-	33

Table 7.

5= Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Undecided
2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

EDF 317 Interactive TV class
Mid semester assessment %, Richmond Campus

N=8

Item	5	4	3	2	1
1. Learned as would in a traditional class	-	12	-	12	75
2. Confident in a KTLN class	25	25	-	-	50
3. Comfortable in a KTLN class	25	25	-	-	50
4. Diversity in exchange of ideas between all sites	12	12	-	25	-
5. Students participated more than they would in a traditional class	-	-	25	12	12
6. Site facilitator was always available	25	-	-	12	12
7. Site facilitator was always helpful	25	-	-	12	12
8. Advantages of a KTLN class outweigh the disadvantages	12	-	-	12	25
9. Will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student	62	-	38	-	-

Table 8.

5= Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Undecided
2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

EDF 317 Interactive TV class
End of semester assessment %, Richmond Campus

N=8

Item	5	4	3	2	1
1. Learned as would in a traditional class	28	14	-	28	28
2. Confident in a KTLN class	24	43	-	14	14
3. Comfortable in a KTLN class	28	43	-	14	14
4. Diversity in exchange of ideas between all sites	28	-	28	-	43
5. Students participated more than they would in a traditional class	14	25	43	14	-
6. Site facilitator was always available	57	14	-	-	28
7. Site facilitator was always helpful	57	14	-	-	28
8. Advantages of a KTLN class outweigh the disadvantages	28	14	14	14	28
9. Will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student	57	-	-	-	43

Table 9.

Summary of Mid and End of Semester Assessment for EDF 202 and EDF 317.

D = Danville R = Richmond

Item	EDF 202 D	EDF 202 R	EDF 317 D	EDF 317 R
1. Learned as would in a traditional class	Same	Higher	Same	Higher
2. Confident in a KTLN class	Higher	Higher	Same	Higher
3.Comfortable in a KTLN class	Higher	Higher	Same	Higher
4.Diversity in exchange of ideas between all sites	Lower	Higher	Same	Higher
5. Students participated more than they would in a traditional class	Higher	Lower	Same	Higher
6. Site facilitator was always available	Higher	Lower	Same	Higher
7. Site facilitator was always helpful	Higher	Lower	Same	Higher
8. Advantages of a KTLN class outweigh the disadvantages	Same	Higher	Same	Higher
9. Will recommend taking a KTLN class to another student	Higher	Higher	Same	Lower